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Best Method to Resist Invasion of Boll Weevil and to Improve the Backward State of What Has Been a "Sure-Crop" Industry.

Washington, D. C., June 25.—The need of shortening the growing season of cotton has been recognized as the best means for securing protection against injury from the boll weevil, and the U. S. Department of Agriculture has been recommending a system of cotton culture which aims to secure the production of more cotton in a shorter period of time. The system is also important for regions where the crop is limited by drought or by short seasons as in the northern districts and should help to remedy the backward state of what has been considered in the past a "sure-crop" industry. The Department's Farmers' Bulletin (No. 601), entitled "A New System of Cotton Culture and Its Application," has been issued to give the details to those who may profit by it.

The danger of injury from the boll weevil is greatest under conditions that favor the luxuriant growth of the young plants, and induce the formation of large numbers of vegetative branches, which produce no bolls. The control of the formation of these branches is the keynote of the new system. The suppression of these branches avoids injurious crowding of the plants and also makes it possible to leave more plants in the rows than is now customary. The most important consideration which the new system requires is the placing of plants closer together, during the earlier stages of growth, until the stalks have grown beyond the stage where vegetative branches are produced.

It is true of the cotton industry that the more skillful the farming the larger the rewards. Cotton has so long been considered a "sure-crop" that often it is cultivated under careless methods. This is one of the reasons for the backward state of the industry. The invasion of the boll-weevil pest has been forcing upon cotton raisers the necessity of improved methods. Cotton is every year becoming less a "sure-crop." The expansion of cotton culture in foreign countries is an additional reason why more careful methods must be adopted in this country to attain the maximum results.

The first step is to secure the attention of the intelligent farmer and convince him of the truth of the principle upon which the new system is founded. He may then observe and experiment for himself with rows of cotton thinned to different distances and at different stages of growth and may see for himself the relation of the habits of the plants to cultural problems.

Many intelligent farmers are aware of the fact that rows of cotton accidentally left without thinning are sometimes much more productive than rows that were thinned in the usual manner and have reflected on the possibility of securing larger crops by closer planting, but the underlying principle has not been understood. The behavior of cotton under different conditions is so variable that any farmer might well hesitate to adopt a method of culture suggested by an occasional occurrence like the production of a larger crop on an unthinned row.

In each cotton-growing community there are usually some farmers

who believe that cotton should be left closer together in the rows, but the tendency in recent years has been toward wider spacing, owing to a general recognition of the evil effects of having the plants too close together, especially under conditions that favor luxuriant growth. Those who use narrow spacing may boast of phenomenal yields in some seasons, but in other years they appear at a disadvantage with their neighbors. The possibility of making a safe combination of the two conflicting methods seems not to have been suggested. The same conflict is shown in the results of formal experiments to determine the best planting distances as in the popular opinions on the subject. Wide spacing in the rows seemed better in some cases and narrow spacing in others so that no definite conclusions could be reached.

The theory of wider planting has its limitations as well as that of closer planting. To reduce the number of plants by wider spacing in the rows means that a longer period of time is required to produce a crop. This is true because large luxuriant plants do not begin to produce flowers and bolls as early as plants of more restricted growth. It may seem more logical to many that the plants making the most rapid growth must produce the earliest and largest crop, but this is not true. Large luxuriant plants are later in setting and maturing a crop because the young plants of luxuriant growth develop limbs producing no bolls at the expense of the lower fruiting branches necessary to the production of an early crop. The limbs of a cotton plant which produce no flowers or bolls are called "vegetative branches," or "wood limbs," to distinguish them from the fruiting branches.

The row rather than the individual plant must be considered as the unit under the system as recommended. The form of the row demands first attention and through improving it come the advantages of the new method. More plants are left in the rows, and yet, injurious crowding is avoided. Plants that have numerous vegetative branches are more crowded at 2 or 3 feet plants with single stalks at 8 or 10 inches. With the vegetative branches controlled, the spacing is no longer a question of feet, but of inches, given better results than those at Rows spaced at 6 inches have usually 12 inches or any greater distance.

By avoiding the development of the large wood limbs the rows are kept narrower and more hedged-like, so that fruiting branches receive sunlight throughout the season. This provides much more favorable conditions for the ripening of the crop. When the vegetative branches are allowed to shut off the light by growing up between the rows, most of the bolls on the lower fruiting branches fail to reach normal maturity. Fields of large luxuriant plants often produce very small crops because only the upright growing ends of the stalks and vegetative branches have access to the light. This undesirable condition is avoided by restricting the development of

the vegetative branches in the earlier stages of growth.

The number of vegetative branches is also influenced by temperature and soil conditions. If the weather remains cool or if the soil is very dry, not many vegetative branches will develop, even when the young plants are widely separated. But if the conditions favor a luxuriant development of the young plants, early thinning will result in the development of a large number of vegetative branches, and the subsequent crowding will be great. Even in the absence of any disease or insect pests the crop may be ruined by crowding alone.

"Suppress the vegetative branches," is the advice of the Department to farmers desiring to experiment with the new system. Practical experiments must be undertaken by those desiring to understand the method; merely reading about experiments of others is not sufficient.

How long the thinning should be delayed to suppress the vegetative branches and how close the plants should be left in the rows are questions that the skillful farmer should learn to determine for himself, since the actual conditions must be taken into account to secure the best results. If the farmer does not look into the subject far enough to grasp the underlying principle, he is not likely to be able to appreciate the new method or to use it to the best advantage.

The two features of the new system—deferred thinning and closer spacing—must be properly combined in order to insure a favorable result. Most farmers believe that either of these changes will injure the crop, and the danger is that they will try one change without the other instead of making a complete break with previous theories and methods. Until the principle of branch control is understood it is difficult to believe that two apparently injurious changes can have a beneficial result.

Actual results of experiments are given in the new bulletin and the intelligent cotton raiser who is sincerely desirous to better conditions is advised to send for the pamphlet.

DR. GRAY REFUSED BAIL.

The application of Dr. J. S. Gray, of Matoy, slayer of Simon Cochran, for writ of habeas corpus, occupied the attention of District Judge Hatchett Friday and a decision was not given until that evening when Judge Hatchett announced that the prisoner would be committed to jail without bond.

Attorney W. E. Utterback of this city and W. S. Murphy, of Bennington attempted to show the court by medical examination of the defendant, that his life and health is impaired by imprisonment in the county jail. An examination was made by Drs. J. L. Shuler and A. S. Hagood of Durant, and C. F. Talferro, of Bennington, all three of whom testified in the hearing.

The examining trial of Dr. Gray was held before a justice of the peace at Bennington about two weeks ago, and the verdict resulted in the same decision as was rendered yesterday.

E. M. Evans, agent Royal Typewriter.

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Township 6, warrants No. 110, 1912-13 series.
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Township 8, 3 to 9 inclusive, 1913-14 series.
Township 9, warrants, all.
Township 10, warrants, 35 to 68, inclusive, 1912-13 series.
Township 11, warrants, all.
GEO. HARRISON,
County Treasurer.

W&A

SERIOUS SHOOTING AT MADILL.

Fleeing from his merciless pursuer along Madill's busiest streets, Henry Hodge, a concrete worker was shot three times by C. E. House, an oil mill employee shortly before the noon hour Thursday. The shooting began on Main street. The first shot struck Hodge in the neck. Wheeling, Hodge ran and House, pursuing, fired a second time, the bullet going wild and kicking up a spurt of dust in the middle on the square. The fleeing man turned the corner at the City National Bank with his assailant close upon his heels, firing as he ran. Reaching the northeast corner of the square Hodge fled through Heath's store with House still following and shooting. In all House fired six times, three of the bullets striking his mark—Hodge's body. Of the three bullets that went wild one buried itself in the square, one punctured a neat hole through the show window of Ewing Brothers and one cut a lasting trade mark on the rear door-post of Heath's store.

After emptying his gun House calmly reloaded it, walked out through the assembled crowd of gaping onlookers, marched down to the county jail and surrendered himself to the jailer in charge.

Hodge continued his flight to the Alamo Hotel where Dr. laylock was

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called in and dressed his wounds. One of these wounds the doctor states may prove very serious.

In his statement to County Attorney Coakley, House alleged that Hodge had been paying undue attention to his wife and attempting to wreck his home.

House will probably be held without bail awaiting the result of Hodge's wounds.—Madill News-Democrat.

ELECTION ORDERED FOR AUGUST FOURTH.

Governor Cruce Saturday issued 4, on the two referendum questions that have held up laws, enacted by the last Legislature, prohibiting bookmaking and gambling. They are referendum petitions 24 and 25 and State questions 61 and 62, respectively.

The gaming laws passed by the last legislature are very severe, making the violation of the law a felony and providing in addition for heavy fines. For conducting a gambling game a penitentiary sentence from one to ten years and a fine of from \$500 to \$2,000 is provided. Bet-

ting or playing at any of these games is made a misdemeanor. The operation of slot machines for either money or trade is also made a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of from \$25 to \$100, or not more than 30 days in jail, or both such fine and imprisonment. A provision which cuts out the cigar girl from permittees.

Those who conduct race track gambling schemes are subject to a fine of from \$200 to \$500, one-tenth customers to throw dice is also placed in the bill.

From \$100 to \$1,000 a day may be recovered by civil suit against the owner of any building or other property used for gambling purposes, fourth of which shall be paid to the informer, and to imprisonment not less than thirty days nor more than ninety days. Similar penalties are placed on a telegraph company, or its agent, which transmits information for pool or bookmaking purposes over the wire. Conviction may be had on the unsupported evidence of an accomplice or participant who shall be given immunity from prosecution for anything concerning which he may testify.

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